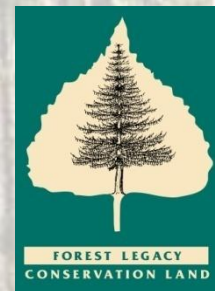


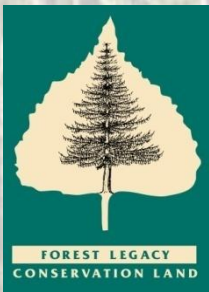
MISSISSIPPI'S FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM AN OVERVIEW

SEPTEMBER 2008



Forest Legacy Program Purpose

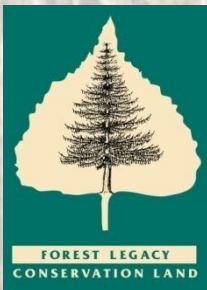
- Title XII – State and Private Forestry Forest Stewardship Act of 1990 - Section 1217 – Forest Legacy Program
- “In cooperation with appropriate State, regional, and other units of government for the purposes of **ascertaining and protecting environmentally important forest areas that are threatened by conversion to non-forest uses and, through the use of conservation easements and other mechanisms, for promoting forest land protection and other conservation opportunities.** Such purposes shall also include the protection of important scenic, cultural, fish, wildlife, and recreational resources, riparian areas and other ecological values.”



Assessment of Need

The primary program document for implementing the Forest Legacy Program in Mississippi. Guidelines require that MS Forestry Commission:

- Assess forests and forest uses in the State.
- Describe forces that are converting forest to non-forest use.
- Describe eligibility criteria to identify Forest Legacy Areas.
- Guide implementation of FLP in the State.



Mississippi's FLP Goal/Objectives

Goal - to protect environmentally important forests in Mississippi threatened by conversion to non-forest uses.

Objectives -

- Sustain native or rare and unique forest ecosystems
- Protect water quality
- Protect forests from development along lakes and rivers and buffer protected lands
- Protect wildlife habitat
- Maintain traditional forest uses, including hunting and fishing
- Sustain productive forests
- Provide public recreation opportunities



How Mississippi's Final AON is organized...

Chapter 1 – Mississippi's Forests

Chapter 2 – Forest Ownership

Chapter 3 – Trends and Threats
to Forest Resources

Chapter 4 – Existing
Conservation Measures for
Forests

Chapter 5 – Implementing
Mississippi's FLP

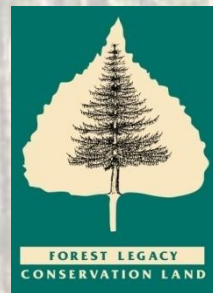
Chapter 6 – Mississippi's Forest
Legacy Areas



Chapter 1 - Mississippi's Forests

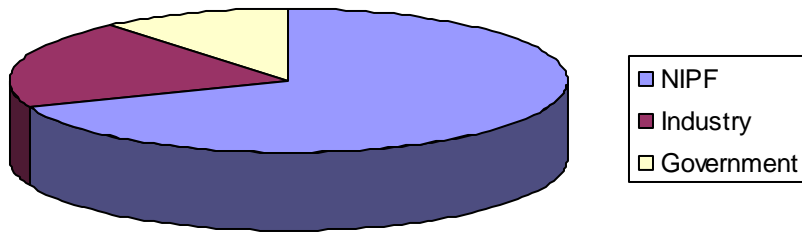


- **Size/location**
- **History**
- **Current Uses**
- **Forest Communities**
- **Wildlife Species of Concern**
- **Ecoregions – Topography, Soils, Geology**
- **Climate**
- **Soils**
- **Streams and Watersheds**
- **Recreation/Aesthetics**
- **Cultural Heritage**
- **Mineral Resources**
- **Forest Products/Management Opportunities**



Chapter 2 – Forest Ownership

Ownership of Mississippi Forest Lands



- Land Tenure
- Landowner Characteristics
- Forest Ownership Trends

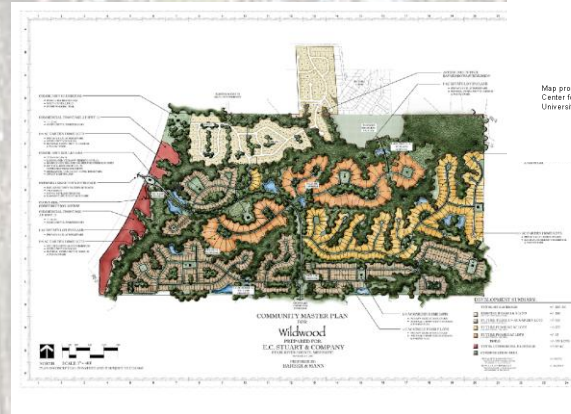
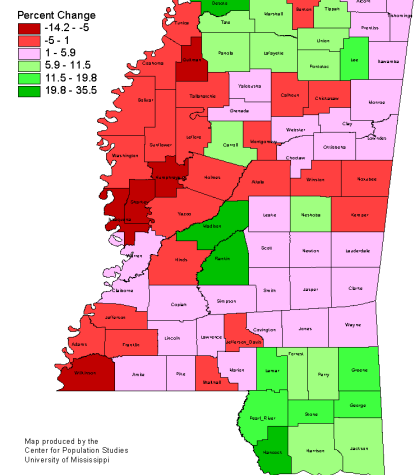


Chapter 3 – Trends and Threats to Forest Resources in Mississippi

- Fragmentation of Ownership
- Industry Restructuring
- TIMOs and REITs
- Cover type conversion
- Sprawl/Population Growth
- Projected Changes in Forests in the South
- Public Concern

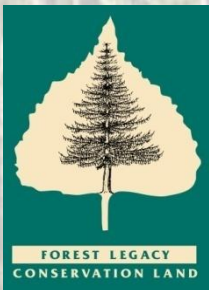


Population Change 1990 to 1997



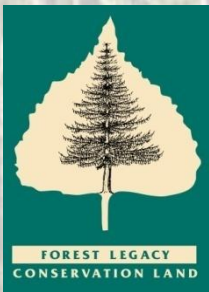
Chapter 4 – Existing Conservation Measures for Forests

- State and Federal Programs
- Non-Government Programs
 - Land trusts and conservancies and other initiatives
 - Industry - SFI
- MS and Federal Laws, Regulations and Tax Incentives
- Public Lands



Chapter 5 – Implementing Mississippi's FLP

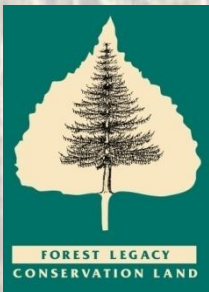
- Stakeholder and Public Participation
- Program Goal and Objectives
- Identification of Environmentally Important Forests
- Obtaining Interests in Land
- Landowner Participation
 - Application
 - Selection Procedure
 - Parcel Eligibility Criteria
 - Application Deadlines



Parcel Eligibility Criteria

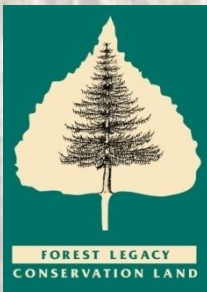
National Guidelines

1. Importance
2. Threatened
3. Strategic
4. Project Readiness



Mississippi Guidelines

1. Threatened
2. Willing Landowner
3. Contributes to Multiple Objectives
4. Environmental Values that can be protected and managed through easement or purchase



Nuts and Bolts

Cost Share – federal contribution cannot exceed **75%**. Non-federal contribution of 25% is required.

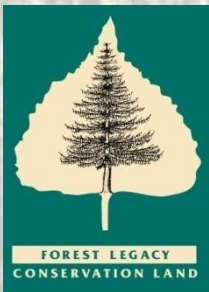
Federal Funds can be used to purchase land and can cover transaction costs, appraisals and review, land surveys, closing costs, BDRs, title work, purchase of title insurance, easement drafting and other real estate transactions.

Federal funds can be used to facilitate donations of land or interest in lands by paying expenses directly related to the donation, including land surveys, easement drafting, title work and BDRs. For an outright CE donation, FLP funds cannot be used for an appraisal, but may be used in the case of a partial donation.

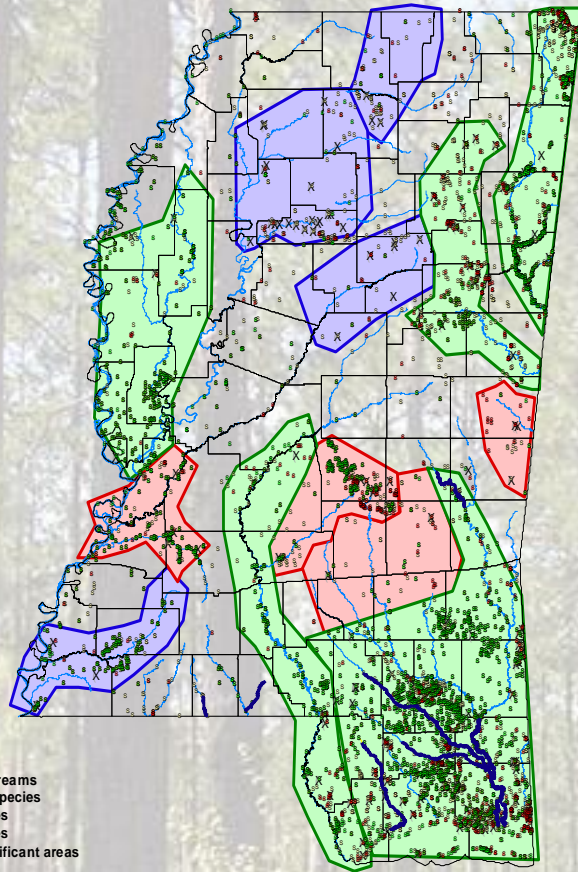
Less than 25% of tract can be non-forested, but must be compatible with maintaining forest cover (farmland, pasture, grassland, shrubland, open water and wetlands).



Defining with Mississippi's Forest Legacy Areas



Based on Important Natural Communities



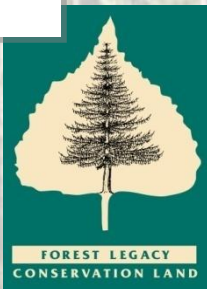
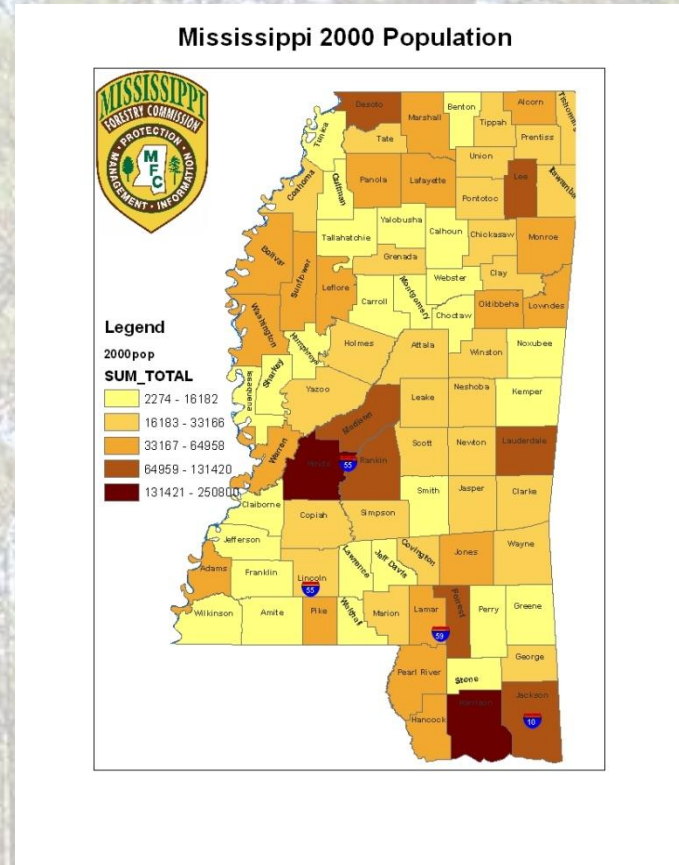
Natural Heritage Program Data

- Elemental occurrence of federally listed threatened and endangered plant and animal species.
- State ranked plant and animal species in two categories: S1 (critically imperiled in Mississippi because of extreme rarity or because of some factor(s) making it vulnerable to extirpation) and S2 (imperiled in Mississippi because of rarity or because of some factor(s) making it vulnerable to extirpation).
- Location of state and federal designated scenic streams.
- Natural Areas identified and tracked by NHP as important and rare communities.



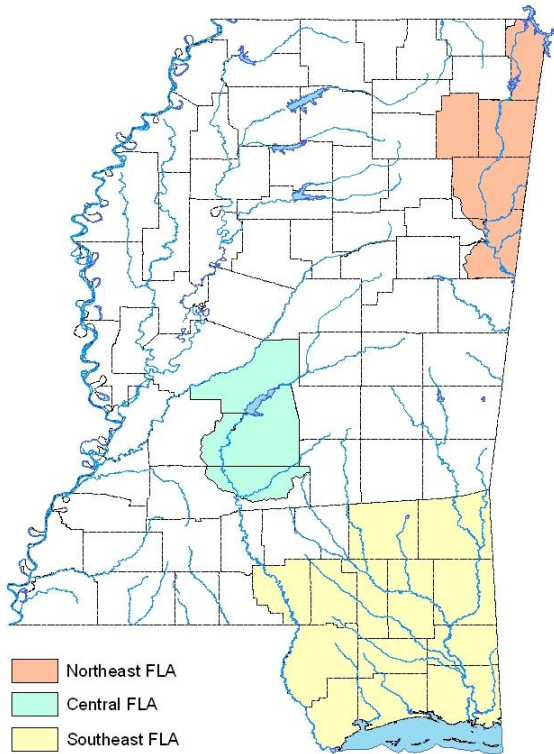
Based on Population Densities and Trends

- MS population increased 13% from 1990 to 2000.
- Our population estimate for 2030 is 3.2 million.
- As population density increases, the probability of forest functioning as timberland decreases.
- Sprawl causes fragmentation, eliminates ecological corridors, diminishes biodiversity.



Mississippi's Forest Legacy Areas

Mississippi Forest Legacy Areas

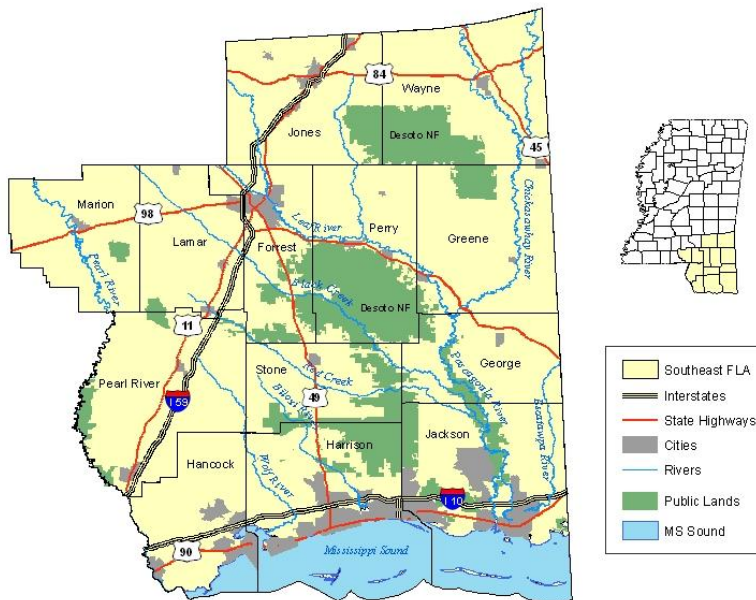


- Northeast FLA
- Central FLA
- Southeast FLA



Southeast FLA

Southeast Mississippi Forest Legacy Area

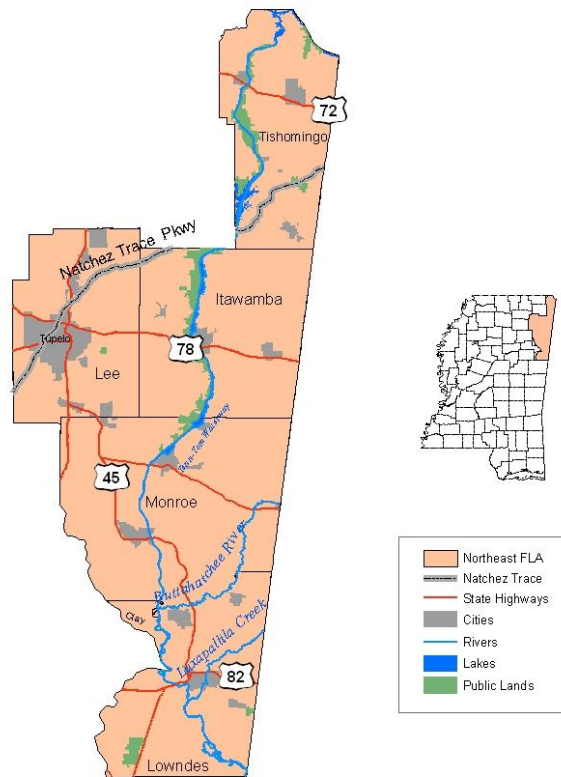


- 13 counties
- 80% forested
- Significant population growth and shift in region, exacerbated by hurricane
- Large number of species of concern
- Values – public lands, Pascagoula, Black Creek, Lower Pearl, pine savannas, maritime forests, small stream swamp forests, important bird areas, military lands,



Northeast FLA

Northeast Mississippi Forest Legacy Area



- Parts of six counties
- 62% forested
- Population increase in some areas already occurring. More projected.
- Large number of species of concern.
- Values – Buttahatchie, Northeast Hills/ Tennessee River Drainage, TTWW, scenic streams, riparian corridors, Natchez Trace.



Central FLA



- Parts of five counties
- 69% forested
- Population growth has already caused significant conversion, more occurring – suburban, exurban growth.
- Important to reconnect the ecological corridors.
- Values – Upper and Lower Pearl Drainage, Strong River, Ross Barnett, Big Black River, Natchez Trace Corridor.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Mississippi Forestry Commission
Attn: Forest Legacy Program
301 North Lamar Street
Suite 300
Jackson, Mississippi 39201
Bruce Frasier - 601-656-1381
bfrasier@mfc.state.ms.us
www.mfc.state.ms.us

